



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,
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MERTENSIA BELLA **OREGON BLUEBELLS**

Oregon Bluebells is a perennial with solitary stems that are 10-40 cm tall, and arise from a bulb-like root. The ovate leaves are thin, entire-margined, evidently veiny, and 38 cm long. The lowermost leaves are reduced to membranous sheaths, while the others have progressively reduced leaf stalks upwards on the stem. Foliage is mostly glabrous. The blueflowers are stalked and borne in open inflorescences at the top of the stem and in the axils of the upper leaves. The lower two-thirds of the 5 petals are united into a bell-shaped corolla that is 6-10 mm long. The calyx is 2-3 mm long and sparsely hairy. Flowering in late May-June.

The bell-shaped flowers lack a distinctly constricted lower tubular portion separate from a flaring upper portion, distinguishing this species from all other *MERTENSIA* in our area.